

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

The following listing of claims replaces all prior versions of claims in the application.

1-4. (Cancelled)

5. (Previously Presented) A method, comprising:

- a) homogenizing collected feces of a person in the presence of an RNase inhibitor to prepare a suspension thereof, without separating cell components from the feces;
- b) extracting RNA from the suspension from step a) to provide extracted RNA;
- c) carrying out reverse transcription on the extracted RNA from step b) to provide cDNA;
- d) amplifying the cDNA from step c);
- e) detecting the expression level of COX-2 in the amplified cDNA from step d), and
- f) determining that the person has colon cancer if COX-2 is expressed in the amplified cDNA.

6-16. (Cancelled)

17. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 5, wherein the feces is frozen.

18-21. (Cancelled)

22. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 5, wherein the feces is human feces.

23. (Cancelled)

24. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 5, wherein the RNase inhibitor is a guanidine salt.

25. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 5, wherein the RNA extracted in step (b) is total RNA including prokaryotic RNA and eukaryotic RNA.

26-33. (Cancelled)